5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Bachajón

Five wild boars' jaws and an armadillo's tail hung in the eaves so that the dogs might see them, to prevent their going away or losing heart. A swizzle stick, *mahas,* about 40 centimeters long, was used for stirring cocoa. It is made by cutting a twig above a joint with four branches. Two rat traps, *yakul,* just outside the hut, were exact models of the larger deadfalls used for jaguars (see fig. 308).

Add to this the clothes on the inhabitants backs, and the man's machete, and you will have a complete list of the worldly possessions, large and small, of a Bachajon family—altogether some forty-four different kinds of things. We assembled as many together as possible, arranging them as for a feast, and placed in the middle the small son of the house, and a little monkey of a boy, Miguel, who accompanied us to run errands (fig. 292).

Fig. 292—Bachajon boy guests.

If mud-plastered walls are added to this description, you have a typical Ocosingo Valley house. Change the grass roof to palm, it is the kind to be seen in the jungle country.

At Muxculja (*muckul ha,* "Covered Water"), in the jungle, our Indians built us a trail shelter or hut of the type called in Spanish *champa,* and in Tzeltal *tutna',* "small house." This enabled us to note the manner of building the frame-work and laying on the roof. The kind of *champa* built for us, with an A-roof and gable ends, is called *gwakac na',* "cow house"; the more common type built by the Indians when alone, a simple lean-to, is called *lestee-pat* (should be *lestee-pahk?*) "only one wall."

Our shelter being more than usually pretentious, we could observe most of the steps in building a true house, although, of course, the form here was different and the construction much lighter (figs. 293-294). It was three meters, fifty-one centimeters long by three meters wide, two meters high at the ridge-pole, one at the eaves. It had no walls. From the construction of the outline of the frame to the completed thatching it took fifty minutes for four men, later only two, working without haste.

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Sivacá

red-gold colour. The baking observed at Amatenango, which is described in the following chapter, was quite different. 323

The forms made at Sivacá are: (Fig. 299) a tub, *pok'et;* cooking pots or *ollas, ŏcom;* form for making cooking pots, *hutstahibe;* bowl, *tsets;* stand for bowl, *awaliko;* form for making sugar, with a hole in the bottom, *hor'mo;* tortilla griddle, *tsamets;* and a perforated olla for washing corn, *tcistcinair.*

The Bachajon make most of these also, but the tub and clay *tsets* are rare, a gourd often serving for the latter. The surfaces are less well smoothed. In no case was any attempt at decoration observed. It should be noted in this respect, however, that almost all of these would eventually be quite blackened with smoke.

[142] [291] [302] [516] [342]

FIG. 298—Sivacá, Chia. Woman making pottery.

Among the forms shown in the figures, it will be noticed that there is no piece with a markedly contracted neck; such work seems to be beyond their abilities. All through this district the big *cantaras* or water jars are imported from Tenango, and will be discussed in the next chapter.

In general throughout Ocosingo Valley white cloth for men's clothes and women's blouses, made of native cotton, *na'*, as well as the men's sashes, are of local manufacture. Among the Bachajon, cloth is compartively little woven, but sashes are always home made. The coloured thread is usually bought in stores. Weaving is entirely done by the women. 286 [291]

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Sivacá

286 126 123 Our Indian hostess at the Encanto house was commissioned to make us a sash; after observing and photographing the process (fig. 300), we bought the loom with the unfinished piece on it. At Sivacá the army of guides produced a woman who was weaving cloth, and another who was just preparing the thread for the loom (fig. 301). The former was very bored and matter-of-fact about the whole pro-

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FIG. 299—Sivacá, Chis. Pottery Forms.

A. Ocom. C. Teameta. E. Hutstahihe. G. Awalihe.
B. Pok'et. D. Hor'mo. F. Tseta. H. Teistcinaix.

286 126 123 ceeding, but the latter, a younger one, was at first frightened. At the first sight of me, she put away all her work. As she spoke no Spanish, I fell back upon a corps of seven or eight interpreters, who all spoke together while I looked as harmless as possible. Then she thought that the Mayor of Ocosingo, or the President of Mexico, or some one had sent for her, and packed her things to travel. At last she understood, and then balked. The men explained to me, with some amusement, that she was ashamed—"*dice que tiene verguenza*" — but finally she consented to pose. The result was a picture worth the while; she herself was a good type of young Indian woman, on her back was slung a pretty though somewhat grimy baby, while an underfed puppy and very small chicken completed the family group. The picture also shows a good example of the squatting-seat mentioned when listing the contents of the Encanto house (see fig. 301).

[284] [291] [142] [302] • [516] ←

FIG. 300—El Encanto, Chis. Woman Weaving.

283 The spindle, *pětět*, is a stick 35 centimeters long, at the foot of which is a clay whorl, for which no name was given. It is spun with the weighted end resting in a gourd bowl, the upper end held against

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Sivacá

the thigh. The spinning is done with the left hand, the right holding and drawing out the thread, *tsahalna'* (fig. 302-d). 283

The thread is then arranged for the warp on a form called *kumen* (fig. 302-c). This is a pole 1.40 meters long, notched at intervals on one side, and with a groove in one end joining two unnotched sides. In one of the notches, according to the length of thread desired, is placed a cross stick, *tumin-te,* (equals *kumen-te?*), 45 centimeters long. The thread is laid from one end of this cross stick, through the groove, around to the other end of the cross stick, and so, back and forth, until the required number of woof-strands are prepared. The loops around one half of the cross stick are then transferred to the head-stick of the loom, those around the other to the foot-stick, and the woof is ready. At the head end, the loops are braided for the selvage. 286 342 284 142 516 854 302 291 231

FIG. 301—Sivacá, Chis. Woman Winding Thread.

The loom, *holēl,** has no rigid frame. The woof is stretched over the head and foot-sticks, *wolol-te.* The head-stick is fastened to a beam in the house or to a branch, usually more than a meter above the ground. Before this the weaver sits, with the foot-stick strapped to her by a broad leather strap, *ku'epat,* thus holding the set-up taut (fig. 303). At a little distance below the head-stick, the woof-strands are crossed, those underneath being carried on top, and held in place

*Holēl is one of a large class of words ending in *-el, -il,* or *-ul,* which are at once verbal nouns and infinitives; e. g. *tal-il,* to come, or the act of coming, corresponding to the Latin *venire* and *venirendo. Hol-il* primarily means to weave, here it is also applied to the loom. 193

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Tenango

and often have no fringe. We were told that it was impossible to see a woman weaving at that time, but by persistent stalking the writer finally managed to locate a girl at work, whom he observed and sketched from behind a bush. The women here were so consistently shy that no doubt she would have rolled up her loom, which was of just the same type as the one seen at Sivacá, and fled into the house had she known she was observed. Our procession through this very pretty village, too, was a serious affair—distinguished strangers being shown around town by the mayor—and had none of the cheerful joking and general *bonhommie* that produced such friendliness and good results at Sivacá.

Something more should be said about the agriculture here. Ordinarily, Indians go out to choose their own land in the bush and

Fig. 319—Tenango, Chis. La Farge drawing pottery.

plant it with little cultivation, placing the corn close together. Here each family has its land assigned to it by the council. As the same field must be planted year after year, the hills of corn are widely spaced, and the ground is turned over as deeply as possible by means of heavy hoes, *ak'en*, purchased in San Cristóbal. As was said, everything is fenced as much as possible. When some of our pack animals got loose in a field, the excitement was intense. In the yards of the houses they raise corn, beans, and a plant related to tobacco. This plant grows nearly as tall as a man. The leaf is rubbed on their legs to cure fatigue. It is carried with lime in a small gourd and offered and accepted for chewing with much the same bowing and formalities as obtained among our ancestors when offering snuff.

[P.198-E]

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Plate 6. Woman scraping a cantero that has been sun-dried in the porch of her home. Behind her is an altar with pictures of the saints. Photograph by Marcey Jacobson.[1]

[1] (correction, this should read "photograph by Marcey Jacobson"..Analyst)

[P. 198G]

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Plate 8. Women of a household and their helpers grinding corn and making tortillas with a press in preparation for a house ceremony. They are all dressed in the traditional costume. Most of such food preparation is done inside the house except at the time of large festivals. Photograph by Marcey Jacobson.

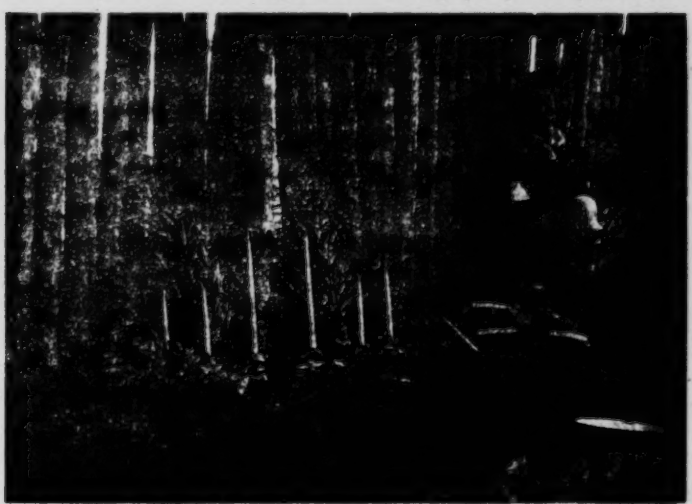

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Plate 9. Curer sitting next to the center pōst where he has just arranged the candles and branches of spring bushes in preparation for the house fiesta. The basket contains the protective crosses, bound with palm fronds, which he will nail on the house posts. The basin contains springwater, and the gourd in the foreground contains the powdered medicines which will be added to the water and drunk. Photograph by Marcey Jacobson.

[P 198-H]

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Plate 10. Future members of the household line up with the branches of spring bushes with which the curer will brush them. Photograph by Marcey Jacobson.

as lawyers. The defendant is sometimes accompanied by supporters who feel that he has a case. The failure of parents to accompany a defendant, regardless of his age, is attributed to their shame over their child's misbehavior and their own failure to train him properly. The judge does not limit himself to passing judgment but also counsels the defendant as to how he should behave.

The town hall is usually shut and locked at noon unless some business requires more time. In the evening about six, the officials return to take their same posts. They sit with their arms drawn inside their woolen jackets for warmth. After a half an hour they drift home. People rely on the presence of officials rather than particular actions to maintain social control, and it is their appearance at regular hours that assures the villagers that the town is being well run.

Local autonomy depends primarily on retaining social control functions. Civil officials try to settle disputes locally and avoid the entry of Ladino officials from the departmental capital, although the judges and president will threaten the defendant with taking the case to the department if they cannot get compliance. The number of cases referred to the capital has been increasing since 1950 as Table 32 shows. In 1951 the federal government began to fine local officials who failed to report homicide cases and accidental death. The local officials complied, but departmental courts were unable to bring action in over half the cases. No action was taken in 72 cases, or 54 percent, in comparison with 62 cases, or 46 percent, in which action was taken. Domestic cases, except for one of adultery, are adequately handled in local courts and do not appear in the departmental records. The trend shows an increasing number of cases of crimes against persons in comparison to crimes against property, an index to the breakdown in social control processes.

The Church

The church has been built and on two occasions rebuilt—when the tower was struck by lightning—with funds collected locally from household heads. Damage to the church was attributed to the patron saint of the neighboring town of Oxchuk who, the people say, was fighting with their patroness, Santa Lucía. The townspeople feel that they own the

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 301]